

Sunset Village Community Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LIVING WELL IN THE HOME YOU HAVE: HOW DO WE SAVE OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Madison, June 29, 2006 – There is an amazing turn over rate in real estate in older established neighborhoods. Stark Company Realtor, Heidi Nobel states, “I see a lot of younger families moving out of the older neighborhoods to bigger homes as they have more kids or the kids get older and they want to spread out more.” So, how do we maintain our neighborhoods and communities as families rush from small, drafty old homes to sprawling newer ones? On Saturday July 15, 2006 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. the Sunset Village Community Association will sponsor a panel discussion at the Capital City Community Church located at 401 N. Blackhawk to discuss this issue. The discussion will be moderated by Four Lakes Conservation Chair Kate Blumenthal. Panelist include Dimension IV-Madison Architect Ray White, MSB Energy Associates renewable energy expert Niels Wolter and City of Madison building and zoning official Matt Tucker.

This event is in answer to the comments of several residents of Sunset Village, a near west neighborhood of around 1000 households. The neighborhood is currently seeing a great deal of development with Hilldale, Hill Farms and Midvale Plaza construction. This has positively affected property values and increased the housing turn over rate as well. The complaints often heard by association co-president Liz Ringle are those such as: “Everyone seems to move so often it’s hard to get to know anyone.” “We used to have friends with kid’s in the neighborhood but they’ve all moved out to the land of three car garages.” “I guess everyone is just too busy to care about the neighborhood anymore.”

Most of the homes in this part of Madison were built in the mid to late 1940’s. At that time in the US the average home size was about 900 square feet and the average household consisted of two adults and four children. Now in 2006 the average home size has swelled to over 2300 square feet while the average household size has dropped to include only two children. That is 575 square feet per person today as opposed to 150 square feet per person in 1945 according to the Summer 2006 issue of The Reporter, a publication of Washington, DC based Population Connection.

How were families able to live so well with so little space? In this modern age with big televisions, big toys, and big bills, how can a family turn a small, drafty old house into a home for a growing family? This event will address these questions and help us all understand how an average sized family can improve their quality of life and live more lightly on the earth without moving into larger homes with longer commutes. Participants will challenge the notion that bigger is better and learn how to invest in quality and character to make the most of the home you have. When a person invests in a home the investment is not just in the 575 square feet around the individual, it is in the community and neighborhood as well. For more information please visit <http://www.madison.com/communities/sunsetvillage/index.php>.

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